

Remarks

Claims 1 and 22 are amended herein; claims 10 - 18 and 31 are canceled. No new matter is introduced by any of the amendments, and entry thereof is requested. Claims 1 - 9, 19 - 30 and 32 - 35 are now in the application.

Claims 1 - 4, 7 - 9, 19 - 25, 28 - 30 and 32 - 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Hogerton *et al.* U.S. 5,714,252 ("Hogerton"); Claims 1 - 4, 6 - 9, 22 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Ikegami U.S. 6,194,781 ("Ikegami"); and claims 5 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for obviousness over Hogerton in view of Yuzawa *et al.* U.S. 6,335,568 ("Yuzawa").

Claims 18 and 31 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were said to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's having indicated allowable subject matter in the application. Claim 18 as previously presented depended directly from claim 1, and claim 31 as previously presented depended directly from claim 22. Claim 1 is amended herein to recite the limitation of claim 18, and claim 22 is amended herein to recite the limitation of claim 31; and claims 18 and 31 are canceled. Accordingly, claims 1 and 22 are now allowable. Claims 2 - 9 and 19 - 21 depend directly from allowable claim 1, and claims 23 - 30 and 32 - 35 depend directly from allowable claim 22.

In view of the foregoing, all the claims now in the application (claims 1 - 9, 19 - 30 and 32 - 35) are believed to be in condition for allowance, and action to that effect is respectfully requested.


To the extent the points raised by the Examiner may be understood, Applicants do not agree in some respects with the Examiner's reading of the cited art or characterization of Applicants' invention as claimed. This amendment is made to facilitate prosecution of the application, and to obtain allowance of the allowable subject matter, and is made without disclaimer or prejudice to Applicants' right to pursue claims directed to additional subject matter in the application by way of one or more continuing (continuation or divisional) applications.

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PATENT

If the Examiner determines that a conference would facilitate prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone Applicants' representative, undersigned, at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,

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